

respective count of received messages and the respective count of answered calls to form respective totals, and ranking the respective totals to provide the ballot result in the form of respective regional ballot results.

5. (Amended) A method as claimed in Claim 2, wherein said data network addresses are e-mail addresses and said messages are e-mail messages each being addressed to an e-mail address selected from a set of published e-mail addresses correspondingly associated with said candidates.

6. (Amended) A method as claimed in Claim 2, including the steps of:  
storing on a server, screen display data including identifiers for the candidates;  
and  
receiving, at the server, requests sent from the computer terminals for respective users to participate in the ballot, and in response sending the screen display data including identifiers for the candidates to the computer terminals;

and wherein the messages are constituted by respective HTML pages, each such page containing data representing the identity of a candidate selected by a respective user from a screen display of the candidate identifiers.

8. (Amended) A method as claimed in Claim 6, including the steps of:  
storing on the server, screen display data including identifiers for current ballots;  
and  
receiving, at the server, requests sent from the computer terminals for respective users to be sent a list of current ballots, and in response sending the screen display data including identifiers for current ballots to the computer terminals;

and wherein said requests sent from the computer terminals for respective users to participate in the ballot are constituted by respective HTML pages, each such page containing data representing the identity of the ballot selected by a respective user from a screen display of the current ballot identifiers.

9. (Amended) A method as claimed in Claim 6, including the steps of:

storing on the server, screen display data including identifiers for current ballots;

and

receiving, at the server, requests sent from the computer terminals for respective users to be sent a list of current ballots, and in response sending the screen display data including identifiers for current ballots to the computer terminals;

wherein said requests sent from the computer terminals for respective users to participate in the ballot are constituted by respective HTML pages, each such page containing data representing the identity of the ballot selected by a respective user from a screen display of the current ballot identifiers and

wherein the step of receiving requests for respective users to be sent a list of current ballots includes a substep of validating a user in accordance with a security code contained in the request.

10. (Amended) A method as claimed in Claim 6, including the steps of:

storing data for a respective video presentation relating to each of the candidates;

receiving, at the server, a request sent from a said computer terminal for access to a video presentation identified in the request, and, in response,

including that requesting computer terminal in a multicast session for the requested video presentation.

11. (Amended) A method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the respective counts of answered calls are in the form of subtotals on a regional basis, and wherein the combining step treats the respective counts of received messages as being in respect of a notional region.

12. (Amended) A method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the combining step comprises the substeps of summing, for each of said candidates, the respective count of received messages and the respective count of answered calls to form respective totals, and ranking the respective totals to provide the result of the ballot.

14. (Amended) A method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the sending step is performed in response to receipt of a ballot result request from the ballot operator.

19. (Amended) Apparatus as claimed in Claim 17, for use when the respective counts of answered calls comprise counts for each of a plurality of

regions, and wherein the means for receiving messages from computer terminals is arranged to identify the respective source addresses, to group the received messages on a corresponding regional basis as for the calls; and the combining means is arranged to sum, for each of the regions and for each of said candidates, the respective counts of received messages and the respective counts of answered calls to form respective totals, and to rank the respective totals to provide the ballot result in the form of respective regional ballot results.

20. (Amended) Apparatus as claimed in Claim 17, for use when the respective counts of answered calls comprise counts for each of a plurality of regions, and wherein

the combining means is arranged to treat the respective counts of received messages as being in respect of a notional region.

21. (Amended) Apparatus as claimed in Claim 17, wherein the means for receiving messages from computer terminals and for providing a respective count of received messages is responsive to such messages in the form of e-mail messages.

22. (Amended) Apparatus as claimed in Claim 17, comprising a server arranged for storage of screen display data including identifiers for the candidates and comprising (i) means for receiving requests sent from the computer terminals for respective users to participate in the ballot, and (ii) means responsive to receipt of such a request for sending the screen display data including identifiers for the candidates to the computer terminals;

and wherein the means for receiving messages is arranged to receive 30 HTML pages, each such page constituting a said message and containing data representing the identity of a candidate.

24. (Amended) Apparatus as claimed in Claim 17, comprising means arranged to store data for a respective video presentation relating to each of the candidates, and to respond to receipt of a request sent from a said computer terminal for access to a video presentation identified in the request by including

that requesting computer terminal in a multicast session for the requested video presentation.

25. (Amended) Apparatus as claimed in Claim 16, comprising means for validating a person in accordance with an identity for the person and a security code.

26. (Amended) Apparatus as claimed in Claim 23 comprising means for validating a person in accordance with an identity for the person and a security code, and wherein the means for receiving requests sent from the computer terminals for respective users to participate in the ballot is arranged to derive from each such request a respective identity for a user together with a respective associated security code, and to pass these to the validating means.

27. (Amended) Apparatus as claimed in Claim 16, wherein the sending means is arranged to send the ballot result upon receipt of a ballot result request from the ballot operator.

28. (Amended) Apparatus as claimed in Claim 25 wherein the sending means is arranged to send the ballot result upon receipt of a ballot result request from the ballot operator, wherein the sending means is arranged to derive from the request an identity for the ballot operator and a security code, and to pass these to the validating means.

Cancel claims 29 and 30 without prejudice or disclaimer.

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